

III. Remarks

A. Status of Application

After entry of the present paper, claims 40-47 and 49-58 will be pending, of which claims 41, 50, and 56 are in independent form. Claims 39-58 were previously pending. In the interest of furthering prosecution, claims 39 and 48 are cancelled by the present paper without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Applicants reserve the right to seek consideration of these and any other claims canceled during prosecution of the present application in any continuing or divisional applications. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's allowance of claims 56-58. Claim 56 is amended by this paper to correct a typographical error.

Furthermore, Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 41-44, 50-52, and 55 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To that end, Applicants have rewritten claims 41 and 50 into independent form. Additionally, Applicants have amended claims 40 and 45-47 to depend from independent claim 41 and claims 49, 53, and 54 to depend from independent claim 50. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims (40-47 and 49-58) are in condition for allowance.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, all of the claims currently pending in this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request a formal notice of allowability.

The Final Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art of which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Final Office Action or any other Office Action.

Respectfully submitted,

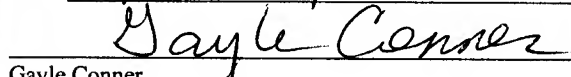


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office via EFS-Web on the following date.

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